A

REVIEW

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE,

AS IT RESPECTS

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INQUIRY,

RECOMMENDED

IN A

SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

On SUNDAY, OCT. 25, 1789:

Being the Anniverſary of

HIS PRESENT MAJESTY'S HAPPY ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

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M.DCC.XC.

TO THE

KING.

SIR,

IT is a real Bleſſing to Great-Britain that its Sovereign is directed, both in public and private Life, by Religious Principle. Any Attempt therefore to confirm or revive in the Hearts of your Subjects the Truths of Chriſtianity will not be unacceptable. In this Confidence the Writer of the following Diſcourſe preſumes to addreſs it to your Majeſty.

No Inquiry he judged to be more becoming the Joyful Occaſion it was his immediate Duty to celebrate, than to point out to the Learned Body (where he had long reſided) in what manner their Studies might, in his Opinion, moſt effectually promote the Influence of the Goſpel.

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The Purſuit, which he has ventured to recommend, deſerves he well knows to be fully inveſtigated. But ſeveral Members of the Univerſity aſſured the Author that what he has urged is no improper Introduction to a plan which might be of general Benefit to Religion.

It is the Intereſt of Chriſtianity as well as of your People that your Majeſty may long continue to reign over this great and enlightened Nation.

Thus, ardently prays,

SIR,

Your Majeſty's

moſt dutiful

Subject and Servant,

WILLIAM PURKIS.

2 CORINTH. VI. 1.

WE THEN AS WORKERS TOGETHER WITH HIM BESEECH YOU ALSO THAT YE RECEIVE NOT THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN.

SAINT Paul in this place, and in ſeveral other parts of his Epiſtles, ſeems peculiarly anxious that the Truth which had been preached ſhould not loſe its good effects upon the minds of the Diſciples, nor be haſtily forgotten. It was not ſo much a Doctrine, that was new, or even approved itſelf to their wiſhes which had been declared to them, as a Doctrine which was to be the Rule of their conduct in this World, and the Hopes of Happineſs in the World to come.—The various opinions with regard to moral and religious Truths, which floated in the minds of the Greeks, readily gave way to any new ſucceeding one, if ſupported by earneſtneſs, abilities, or authority in the Teacher. Any perſon, in the leaſt converſant with the philoſophy of that ingenious

people, will acknowledge the truth of this aſſertion. For the different Sects, into which the School of Socrates was divided ſoon after his death, ſhow us, by Fact, that his Followers did not conſider what he taught as clear, and unchangeable Truths. It was therefore of great conſequence to the ſpreading of the Goſpel, that the Doctrines inculcated by its Inſpired Teachers ſhould ſink deep into the hearts of the Believers, and be at all times looked up to as the ſure and fundamental Articles of their Faith.

In every Inquiry the ſame Principle ſhould be kept in mind, and we ſhould frequently recollect what Truths are already known and decided (if we are clearly convinced of their being ſo), and refer to them as to principles on which we may fully truſt, although perhaps we are not at preſent maſters of the intermediate Steps of the Inveſtigation. In the enlarged view in which the Truths of natural and revealed Religion ſhould be conſidered (as all tending to promote moral Goodneſs in the World), every Argument that contributes to its Growth is ſtrictly cooperating with the Grace of God. And it behoves Us, who are more immediately the Defenders of the Faith that is preached amongſt us, "as Workers together to beware "that we receive not the Grace of God in vain."

It will be no unprofitable Purſuit, nor unworthy of our preſent joyful Solemnity, if we conſider how We in particular

ticular may moſt advantageouſly employ ourſelves, during the preſent happy Æra, of national glory and comfort, to the ſupport of Knowledge and of true Religion. This will be the beſt Tribute of gratitude to God, and alſo the moſt acceptable proof of Loyalty to our Sovereign; whoſe Life is exemplary as a Chriſtian, and whoſe uniform wiſhes and conduct have been to promote and encourage every ſpecies of true Learning and uſeful Inquiry. Inſtead therefore of praiſing, what we all feel the excellence of, our happy Conſtitution in Church and State; when, as at preſent, under the Guidance of a Good and Patriot King: inſtead of running into minute diſcuſſions of particular meaſures of Government, where prejudice, party, or ignorance may lead us aſtray; you will ſuffer me to urge to your reflection a ſubject of the greateſt Import—"*The Expediency and the Neceſſity of a Review of Engliſh* "*Literature, ſo far as it reſpects Moral and Religious Inquiry.*"

The ſeaſonableneſs of this Employment will, I truſt, appear in its full light from a few ſummary obſervations: and the advantages reſulting from it will be, to enable us to ſelect and bring forward a compreſſed Syſtem of moral and religious Truth, comprehending particularly thoſe Subjects, which have engaged the Attention of the Learned during this enlightened Century and part of the laſt, and which ſeem to have been clearly adjudged. To draw this matter as much as poſſible within the Limits of a Diſcourſe, I would be underſtood to refer only—to moral In-

 quiry,

quiry, as it reſpects the ſources of our Duty—to the Truths regarding the Deity—to the Evidences of the Scriptures—and to the clearly eſtabliſhed and avowed Doctrines of the Goſpel.

If we look back into our Purſuits of moral and religious Knowledge, we may remark in general the miſtakes at firſt committed: the violence ariſing from a narrow or falſe comprehenſion of the ſubject: the deluſions which Authors, who had not ſettled their opinions, led themſelves into and ſeriouſly defended: how the objections long made to an opinion, and the defence of it, were equally frivolous on each ſide: how often the ſubject was diſcuſſed before it was fairly determined, or even rightly conceived. But we muſt recollect, that at the revival of Learning, men were buſied only in learning Words, and that they had not yet learned to think; that Societies riſe but by degrees; that the Advancement of knowledge is more gradual ſtill. Of courſe the queſtions, at firſt diſcuſſed, will be trifling in themſelves, and of little conſequence to the world at large. There will be much unneceſſary matter in every Purſuit, ariſing from ignorance or paſſion, and the whole be ſcattered in different parts of long Inquiries, as occaſion or accident brought them forth*. It will then be no uſeleſs

* This is no where more evident than in the trifling Diſtinctions of the firſt

uſeleſs Employment to a candid mind to review what has been already done; to ſeparate ſuch Subjects, as (after a full diſcuſſion) ſeem to have been clearly aſcertained; to enumerate others which (although they have been long conteſted) have not been brought to a fixed point; and to remark in many Writers a want of preciſion, as well as certainty, in the firſt principles of Duty. Thus to clear away the looſe materials from the ſolid Fabrick of Learning would add great Strength to what is already eſtabliſhed: it would give ſupport to weak and undecided minds: it would take away from vain Detractors all thoſe pretences of Uncertainty in Religion and Morals, which we find repeated in every Company, and almoſt in every Age: and it would ultimately prevent Youth from being ſeduced by any oblique inſinuations againſt Truth itſelf. But, if we permit the web of Sophiſtry to entangle the ignorant; if we do not expoſe the futility of falſe Alluſions, falſe Criticiſm, and unfair Analogy, we deſerve cenſure for our Idleneſs, and are negligent in duty and gratitude to theſe Eſtabliſhments, from which we derive our happy Independence. At the ſame time, the principles of the nation at large will be injured. Religion will ſuffer by being expoſed to every inſidious attack, which Infidelity, Craft, or

firſt Reformers with each other about the moſt abſtruſe and ſpeculative Doctrines, and alſo in their Differences with the Romiſh Church with reſpect to Ceremonies. In not diſcerning that Ceremony is only ſubſervient to piety, volumes have been written to no purpoſe.

Ambition

Ambition may excite. Real Learning will decay by the confuſion of Adventurers which may engage; and Truth and Argument may be loſt in the Chaos of an irregular Purſuit. Could we but draw together the ſcattered good Senſe, chiefly, of our own Moraliſts and Divines, we ſhould form a Collection of undeniable Truths of the firſt Importance. We ſhould have an anſwer always ready for them who ſeek the Reaſon of our Faith; and be prepared to repel the falſe logic, or the falſe quotations of our Adverſaries. Particularly, it would not be in the power of ingenious Caſuiſtry to unhinge the principles of common-ſenſe by making us doubt of all paſt Experience, and aſk for a reaſon of the plaineſt intuitive perceptions: nor under a pretence of Cauſe and Effect to eſtabliſh the moſt abſolute Fataliſm, and of courſe a total Indifference of pleaſing God*. We ſhould not be ſtartled at objections againſt the credit or the doctrines of our Religion; objections that have long ſince received their juſt Anſwer, and only appear in a new dreſs; which is the caſe with almoſt every thing ſaid againſt Chriſtianity by the vain, and the impure Philoſopher of Ferney. Similar to what I now urge was the Conduct of the wiſe Juſtinian; who, from the confuſed maſs of Votes of the People, Prætor's Edicts,

* The attentive Reader will ſcarcely need to be informed, that theſe are the Conſequences of Mr. Hume's Philoſophy; if opinions ſo very vague as his deſerve that name.

Senatorial Decrees, and Emperors' Mandates, formed that excellent Code of Laws which is yet the practice of many States, and is in Spirit the admiration of every Legiſlature. It may be thought chimerical by ſome, who love their Eaſe, to lay out a plan for the future direction of the World; but I hope the ſubject will be conſidered of too great Importance to be thus triflingly got rid of. The preſent tide of opinion ſeems to be running faſt towards Scepticiſm in moral as well as revealed Truth. It would be therefore Time worthily employed, indeed, to collect and digeſt into a few volumes ſuch parts of religious Inquiry, as have received the ſanction of wiſe and judicious men: to point out the Limits where many Doctrines evade our Determination: to ſeparate the Authors who have only ſkimmed the Surface of ſerious Learning: to compreſs the wordy and diffuſive Writings of ſome: to methodize others; and to remove that quaintneſs of Style and length of Period, which prevents many of our early Authors from being ſo generally known as they ought to be.—We might thus draw forth a ſyſtem of moral and Chriſtian Truths ſo connected together, as would occaſion our Language to be inquired after, and cultivated with the ſame eagerneſs as have the beſt Writers of either ancient Greece or Rome; with this farther Advantage, that Science and Religious Truth would be found fixed, the one on the Rock of Experiment and Demonſtration—the other on the revealed Will of God, inſtead of the ſandy foun-

foundation of human Conjecture. And when our political Exiſtence ſhall ceaſe, we ſhall ſet, as we have ſhone, with Glory, attended with ſuch Splendour as to become the Guides to future Nations (in each Quarter of the World) to conduct them into Life Everlaſting.—It will not be the beauty of Expreſſion only, the harmony of the Period, or the juſtneſs of the Alluſion; but it will be the greater, the more important buſineſs of conveying Science almoſt grown to Maturity, and Faith almoſt arrived at Demonſtration.

After we have repeatedly converſed with the moſt perfect models of Claſſic Compoſition, and are at each time captivated with the terſeneſs of Expreſſion, and the happy Simplicity, in the Greek Authors more eſpecially, both of Language and Sentiment, we then lament with juſtice their want of preciſion in ſerious Subjects; their deficiency in Religious principles; their inadequate notions of a firſt Cauſe; their ignorance of the beſt argument of a future ſtate of Retribution, as deduced from the Juſtice of God, and the inequality of Happineſs in this Life; their total neglect of purity of manners in private conduct; and their entire diſregard of the beſt motive to Goodneſs, our acting under the all-ſeeing Eye of God.—Although Opinions near to the truth in theſe points may be ſuppoſed, by the admirers of Claſſic Excellence, to be found in the Heathen Writers; yet ſome are not to be found, and others only by critical refinement; but none ſo clearly

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(in the Ages preceding the Goſpel) as to be the general known Rules of Life. If the moral Duties are urged from the more enlarged view of natural Religion, which the Goſpel has brought to light, and enforced from the pure principles of Chriſtian Faith, it would ſoften the fury of the unenlightened Inhabitants of Zealand, and awaken the other diſſolute Iſlanders to purity of Heart and Manners. The whole World by the performance of Sacrifices have looked up to ſome object of Atonement; but the Doctrine of a Saviour who died to redeem the World, and that there remains no more ſacrifice for Sin, tends, in the nature of it, to aboliſh the ſanguinary Rites of Idolatry by pointing out the true object of our Hopes and plea for Mercy. How animating is this, to think that our labours may contribute to fix the ſtandard of Claſſic Elegance in future periods of Society; to hand down the Truths of Science for Nations yet unborn; to cauſe that the Scriptures may be known through the World in our Language; and, to uſe the ſublime Metaphor of Iſaiah, that * "the Earth "may be full of the Knowledge of the Lord as the Wa- "ters cover the Sea."

Still more—Our own Language has ſpread greatly in the World. It has made its way by its own Strength, and chiefly (I will venture to affirm) from that preciſion and clearneſs with which our Writers have

* Iſ. ch. ii. ver. 8, 9.

treated the important ſubjects of Morals and Religion, and, let me add, the Rights of Mankind. Other Nations are now fond of our Learning: and the pretences of our want of elegance and refinement (the minute objections if I recollect right of a trifling French Critic) are now ſunk into Contempt by that energy of Diction, and dignity of Sentiment, with which even our Works of Imagination abound. And here you will allow me to remark by the way: in every Language clearneſs of Expreſſion and ſimplicity of Thought are the firſt marks of Elegance; and that a Language is haſtening to decay when its periods over-abound with Epithets, or ſink into Point. The ſeaſonableneſs therefore of this Review (I repeat) may with Juſtice be urged.—We are now advancing to the cloſe of a moſt active and inquiſitive Century; during which and ſome few Years of the laſt, Science has been greatly improved, and has received a new foundation:—Opinions of the firſt Import have been minutely canvaſſed—Religious Truth in particular has undergone a ſevere, and accurate Scrutiny, and ſeems to be fixed on its proper Baſis—Philological Learning in general appears happily adjuſted—Our Language has been cultivated—Our Style has varied, has been certainly improved, but I fear is beginning to decline—The ſtrength of the human Abilities has been tried in abſtract Speculations to their utmoſt Limits by men of the moſt enlarged Underſtanding: theſe are now beginning to ſink into Conjecture, or metaphyſical Paradox, which muſt end in general Scepticiſm.

Scepticiſm.—A ſpecies of philoſophical Dreams are growing into faſhion, which, by a forced Analogy, would announce every order of Beings, whether Vegetable, Animal, or Rational, as the ſame in *Kind*, and riſing only by imperceptible Gradation into higher degrees of excellence, as they abound with more faculties and are more mechanically modified: thus confounding Motion with Thought, which ſeem in their operation and effect eſſentially diſtinct from each other.—How valuable would a proper ſelection of Learning be, and how conducive to the cauſe of moral Goodneſs! When we could take a Review of thoſe particulars by which Truth has received ſupport: or when we could compare the deficiencies of the early Writings with our preſent Advancement, and fix nearly the boundaries of proper and uſeful Inquiry, it would prevent Perſons of a deſultory turn of Mind, who ſee too haſtily, from claſſing all moral Inveſtigation together as incapable of fixed Principles. With reſpect to Chriſtianity, we ſhall have it in our power to remark (what I think has not been ſufficiently taken notice of) the ſtriking inconſiſtency of deiſtical Writers: all aiming to deſtroy the Goſpel by Principles or Arguments which contradict one another: each of which forms ſuppoſitions that cannot be allowed if Chriſtianity be true, or if the reaſoning of their Fellow-Labourers be juſt. It would be our Glory indeed (and it is in our Power) to hand down to poſterity a manual of every ſpecies of Literature; as well works of Judgment, of ab-

ſtract Science, of Philoſophy, and Natural Hiſtory, as of Genius, and refined Imagination. But the Subject, which I wiſh not to loſe ſight of and I am anxious ſhould undergo a Review and ſelected Publication, regards the moral Principles of the World, and involves in it perhaps the Security of the Goſpel.

This I urge is particularly neceſſary, as we find many of our beſt Authors are often partially republiſhed, and injured by haſty and needy Compilers: others are condemned by a kind of general Criticiſm of perſons who have never read them, and have borrowed their opinions from Party: others again are cried up with a view to draw the Attention of the Age to Doctrines of a peculiar caſt. It becomes therefore the Members of this place to prevent the Truths of our Eſtabliſhment, ſo well and ſo often defended by them, from being loſt in the voluminous Farrago of undigeſted Inquiry, or from being miſconceived, and ill-thought of by ſucceeding Generations. To be always ſilent when our Religion, or our Eſtabliſhment, are attacked, is a degree of negligence to be cenſured, or may be conſidered by the Enemies to Chriſtianity as cowardly Impotence. And although we may not be able to add many new Obſervations, yet to revive in the minds of the People what has been already advanced, and to place it before them in a clear and digeſted manner, muſt be doing real Good. We might produce a ſelection of Engliſh

liſh Writers in Morals and Religion, where not the Beauty of Expreſſion only or Elegance of Style may be looked for (although theſe need not be omitted), but Accuracy of meaning, juſtneſs of Principle, and Strength of Argument will be always found—Where the ſubjects, we meet with, are not to amuſe the Fancy or to captivate the Paſſions, but to improve the Heart and to elevate the Underſtanding. They are not to point out Duties which aim to render us pleaſing only while we are in this World, but to make us objects of divine Love, and capable of Everlaſting Happineſs in the World to come.—It is not the trifling concern of a Kingdom that ruleth over a few Provinces on this ſpot of Earth, but a Hiſtory of the Ways of the Almighty, and a diſplay of his Providence, that has for Ages ſtrove with the perverſeneſs of Men to bring them to the knowledge of his Truth.

Again—The Syſtem of Education in this place, as far as it goes, when built on good School-learning, muſt be allowed by candid Judges peculiarly adapted to direct the mind in its Inquiries after Truth; to enlarge the Underſtanding; to correct its Sallies, and to fix its Principles. But the Expences attending Education, which unfortunately (I fear neceſſarily) keep pace with the manners of the Age, prevent moſt Youth from continuing longer than their firſt Degree. Thus they who have been induſtrious have indeed laid a good Foundation, but are left

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to themſelves to form the Superſtructure. In that vaſt number of Books which occurs in Divinity are we to be ſurpriſed if ſome Youth wander from one Author to another as they hear them caſually recommended? If others are catched by ſuch Opinions of our Enemies as are induſtriouſly obtruded upon them? If others join with the World in exclaiming againſt an Education which has left them the moſt uſeful Knowledge to learn? If others ſink under the Calamity, when they ſee men of no regular Education and with a little common-place Learning, haſtily got together, take the lead in Character and Preferment? Laſtly, if the greater part of our Youth, who laboured here with ſuch ardour in ſevere Inquiry, give themſelves up to Amuſement and to Indolence, and if by this means the eſtabliſhed Religion loſes able Friends, and gains powerful Enemies? As much as in us lies, let us remove this Rock of Offence: let us prepare for Youth ſuch a Compendium of moral and religious Learning as may be the guide to them in their Purſuits. The vigour and attention with which many apply themſelves to the moſt abſtract Inquiry ſhows us what they can and would do, if they had equal Opportunity, and equal Credit given them by their Superiors as Miniſters of the Goſpel. The Want of Inſtruction will be ſupplied by our Endeavours this way, and they who are deſirous to give a reaſon of their Faith may have it in their power to do ſo. We ſhall hear no more of that negligence which our Prelates ſay

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we are guilty of, nor feel at times our beſt Characters injured, by its being aſſerted they were ignorant in the firſt principles of their Profeſſion. The Youth, who have obtained Credit with us, will bluſh to loſe it when they can with ſo little Trouble prepare themſelves for an Examination, which was the Minimum of requiſite Learning at a Period when few of our Hearers could read; and which (from the general diffuſion of Knowledge amongſt us) it is much to be lamented that our Prelates have not long ſince made a more ſerious and important Buſineſs. I am aware that what I now urge has been in part begun by an able Prelate known to us all; and from the Advantages derived from what has been done, which it has fallen within my little experience to obſerve, I am anxious to ſee it carried forwards in a regular manner, that we all "as Workers "together" may appear "not to have received the Grace "of God in vain." I would therefore propoſe for your ſerious Conſideration (and with this I conclude the Exerciſes that are demanded from me here) that we ſhould (from our own Preſs) in a methodical plan publiſh, in a cheap Edition, ſuch a ſeries of Authors of approved merit as might form a Compendium to conduct our Youth in moral Inquiry—for the motives of Duty—the proofs of God and his Attributes—the Evidences of Scripture—and the clearly eſtabliſhed and avowed Doctrines of the Goſpel. To theſe ſhould be added ſome of the ableſt Defences of civil and eccleſiaſtical Polity. This would not be a work of great Labour or Expence;

Expence; for it is not ſo much the Multiplicity, as the judicious Choice of the Books, which creates the Difficulty. To expand each particular would exceed all Limits of one, or even two, or three Diſcourſes: which I deſiſt from here.

In a national View ſomething of this ſort is neceſſary. At preſent we overflow with a variety of looſe and ill digeſted Writing. The abſurd Reveries of the Swediſh Myſtic * are not leſs uncertain in their Principles than are ſome notions of the preſumed Advocates for free Inquiry. Each of which can only tend to ſurpriſe the unwary and to warp the Opinion of the undecided Reader. But the Advocate for Libertiniſm who ſays that "Rules of Mo-"rality are founded on the public Intereſt †," the Reverſe of which is the Truth, joins incentives to inflame the Paſſions. Sorry I am to ſay that the Hiſtorian of the lower Empire betrays a pruriency of unchaſte imagination, as well as of Language, and copies with ſervility the looſe deſigns of the Author I have already mentioned. Scepticiſm in Morals and Religion is enforced by him under the maſk of liberal Inquiry with a Zeal bordering upon Bigotry. How unfairly may be ſeen from the prevailing turn of every Volume of this laboured Hiſtory; where the weak defences of Chriſtianity in the darkeſt Ages, and the

* The Viſions of Emanuel Sweedenbourg.

† See Gibbon's Hiſtory, vol. vi. page 362.

diviſions of its Followers are retailed at large only to render the Goſpel itſelf contemptible to the World, or to make it appear injurious to the Peace of Society. Theſe are told in that ſort of Style which, although it captivates the haſty Reader or imperfect Critic, has too much Point in it either to be the ſtandard of Elegance, or to ſerve the cauſe of Truth.

We ſee at preſent a great and a mighty Nation falling to pieces on a ſudden. The People no longer enduring Oppreſſion ruſh on precipitately to every violence and exceſs. Unreſtrained by any principle of Religion they did not mention the name of the Almighty in their paradoxical Code of the abſtract Rights of Man. For more than a Century paſt it has been the peculiar Aim of the Scholars of this too-refined Nation to ſink the name of Religion into Civility, to argue away moral Truth, and to bring into faſhion the Atheiſtic Philoſophy of Materialiſm and Neceſſity. Theſe notions, ſupported by vanity and wit, have pervaded every ſort of Men amongſt them, and the ſtill ſmall voice of Reaſon and Religion could not be heard by a people who think Religion a ſtate Ceremony, and that we are left in this world to the caſual ſupport of our own Abilities. Let us beware of this prepoſterous ſort of Philoſophy which has ſubſtituted Civility of manners, in the place of the revealed Will of God, as the guide of Life; which confines our Exiſtence to this World, and reſtrains the Al-

mighty from aſſiſting his Creatures. Let us learn from this awful Event that mere worldly power is built on a ſandy foundation, and that man's utmoſt capacity is unable to protect him (either as an Individual or a State) if governed entirely by the wanderings of his own Fancy.

The ſureſt way to guard our Kingdom from ruin and to protract its political Exiſtence is, to revive and enforce the plain doctrines of Chriſtianity which have been ſo often taught, and ſo clearly eſtabliſhed; and to bring them together in ſuch a manner as may confound the ſneers of ſelf-ſufficient Vanity and ſilence the Quibbles of half-learned Objectors. By thus placing in view a compreſſed, clear, and manly Syſtem of moral and religious Truths, which have been determined by ſome of the wiſeſt men that ever lived, we might hope that political Obliquity would be avoided, and the luxury and libertiniſm attending a rich commercial People would be reſtrained.

To conclude:—If we conſider the peculiar Bleſſings this Nation now enjoys, there may not be any future Period, of Ages yet to come, more fortunately adapted to the collecting the Truths of Religion, or ſpreading them in our own Language univerſally. The Continent of Europe is perhaps on the Eve of a great and important Change, and We alone, after a ſevere, and oppreſſing Trial, may ſtand ſecure from the Storms which are gathering round us, if

we do not involve ourſelves in ſudden and violent innovations. Every human Conſtitution may be improved, but as we are bleſt with the moſt perfect Government that either Hiſtory or preſent Experience can produce, we ought to be cautious how we break down any of its eſſential Supports. The deſire of getting quit of every religious Reſtraint, which prevails at preſent with a few in this Kingdom, has its foundation in Conjecture rather than Argument, and is more a matter of dangerous Experiment than a certain method either of producing good to the Community, or of extending the progreſs of Religion. Any State without ſome Teſt of religious Opinions will be of too diſſimilar a Nature either to anſwer the purpoſes of good Government, or to protect the Religion which is declared to be of divine Authority. Although therefore a Teſt of our Faith and practice may admit in proper ſeaſons of being more ſimply expreſſed, it can at *at no time*, if we have Chriſtianity at Heart, admit of being entirely removed.

Our beloved Sovereign's Health is eſtabliſhed,—our Commerce extends—Plenty prevails through the Kingdom—Peace ſeems to be permanent—and our Counſels are prudent and temperate. If we will endeavour to deſerve theſe Bleſſings by a pious confidence in God, and a ſtrict regard to our Duty, we may be truly eminent indeed. The Century may cloſe when we ſhall appear not

only

only the firſt in Arts and Commerce, but our Learning will be diffuſed through the World, and we ſhall continue to be looked up to as the Land of Science and Liberty, and the moſt rational and ſincere Inveſtigators of Moral and Goſpel Truths.

FINIS.